

KentuckyHistoricalSociety

Race and Recruitment:

Breaking Racial Barriers through the US Armed Forces

Lesson plan author: Ryan New, Boyle County High School

Intended grade level: 8th

Number of students: varies

Major content: U.S. History

Unit: multiple applications

Lesson length: 50 minutes (1 class period)

Context

Use—Teachers can use this lesson for discussing how the military provided the impetus for breaking racial barriers. Service to one's country enabled African American men to prove to white society that they were worthy of human and constitutional rights. This cross comparison enables students to see how the United States needed and depended on African American service and sacrifice despite denying them many of the basic rights, equality, and protections afforded to white citizens.

Prior Knowledge—Students will need to have a background on race relations in the United States. Because this lesson spans four U.S. wars and a hundred years of history, students' background can include slavery and Civil War, World War I and the Nadir of Race Relations, World War II and desegregation of the U.S. military, and Vietnam within the Civil Rights Era.

Relevancy—Students of all types break through barriers (age, sex, race, etc.) and different mediums allow these barriers to be broken (military, sports, social movements, etc.).

Learning Objectives

Skills

- Students will work collaboratively to deconstruct visual documents using prior knowledge
- Students will identify and evaluate the author's purpose in producing the document
- Students will evaluate the sources credibility and trustworthiness by considering genre, audience, and the author's purpose.
- Students will discuss and relate how images must be understood in a larger context

Knowledge

- Students will identify the military conflict and trace the views of African American recruitment from the Civil War to Vietnam based on how incorporated African Americans were within US society.
- Students will infer historical context from the document.
- Students will explain how the document might resonate within the African American community based on prior knowledge

Standards

SS-08-5.1.1

Students will use a variety of tools (e.g., primary and secondary sources) to describe and explain historical events and conditions and to analyze the perspectives of different individuals and groups (e.g., gender, race, region, ethnic group, age, economic status, religion, political group) in U.S. history prior to Reconstruction.

SS-08-5.1.2

Students will explain how history is a series of connected events shaped by multiple cause-and-effect relationships and give examples of those relationships.

SS-08-5.2.4

Students will describe the political, social, economic and cultural differences (e.g., slavery, tariffs, industrialism vs. agrarianism, federal vs. states' rights) among sections of the U.S. and explain how these differences resulted in the American Civil War.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6

Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6](#)

Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7](#)

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.10](#)

By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

Instructions

Strategies

"Thinking Like a Historian"—Critical Thinking (Individual, Group, Class)

Kagan—Think, Pair, Share (Group, Class)

Socratic Method (Class)

Directions

Pre-assign students to collaborative groups.

*****Print documents in color and laminate to have a classroom set. Black and white will not be as effective.**

Explain the "Thinking Like a Historian" guide (which will act as the formative assessment. This guide has three major sections (individual, group, and class). (4-5 minutes)

(Individual) Each student is given one document (for teams of four). Give three-four minutes for students to answer the questions provided on "Thinking Like a Historian" then rotate documents until all are completed. No group sharing at this time. (12-16 minutes)

(Group) Students will each choose one document (until each are assigned) to be the leader and will discuss their interpretation of the document. Remaining students will concur or disagree, but each must use the document or prior knowledge/documents as their evidence. As a group, all will answer questions on "Thinking Like a Historian." (8-10 minutes)

(Class) Students as a class will discuss student and group findings to add perspective and depth. Teacher will ask students questions based on "Thinking Like a Historian" and as students answer the question, the teacher will ask other individuals or groups to agree and disagree with evidence taken from prior knowledge or contextual evidence. (20 minutes)

Document A—Civil War "Freedom to the Slave" 1863 African American recruiting poster

Select Vocabulary: Emancipation Proclamation, 54th Massachusetts, Slavery

Document B—World War I "True Sons of Freedom" 1918 African American recruiting poster by Charles Gustrine

Select Vocabulary: The Great War, Gettysburg Address, Abraham Lincoln, Segregation, Conscription

Document C—World War II "Pvt. Joe Louis" 1942 African American recruiting poster (his words for victory)

Select Vocabulary: Color Barrier (Boxing), Joe Louis, War Bonds, Conscription

***Document D**—Vietnam "Uncle Sam Needs you Nigger" 1968 African American anti-recruiting poster by SNCC

*(I have included a censored and uncensored version to use at your discretion. If possible, avoid censoring)

Select Vocabulary: Civil Rights Movement, Vietnam, Black Power, SNCC, Stokely Carmichael

Accommodations

Accommodations for scribes and time should be taken into account. One recommendation is to pre-assign groups according to levels of learners. The collaborative process (and levels) should assist all students.

Assessments

Learning Objective	Type of Assessment	Description of Assessment	Adaptations/ Accommodations
Skill	Formative	1. “Thinking Like a Historian” (Kagan) 2. Student Self-Assessment 3. Socratic Method (teacher questions for clarity)	Extra time if allowed Lower level learners with high level learners
Knowledge	Formative	Exit Slip (based on teacher emphasis)	Redo for accuracy

Thinking Like a Historian: Visual Interpretation (Individual and Group Discussion)

N.B. For each *individual answer below, identify specific parts of the image to use as evidence as your answer*. Directions: Students will work individually, then compare answers within their groups. Once all questions are addressed, the group will move on to discussing the next questions located on the Group/Class discussion chart.

Historical Skills	Questions	Individual Answers Document A	Individual Answers Document B	Individual Answers Document C	Individual Answers Document D
Sourcing	What is the point of view/ bias? When was it produced? Is this source believable? Who would produce this?				
Contextualizing	Which conflict is being represented and how you know? What else was going on at the time?				
Close Reading	Who would have been targeted by these documents? What part of the image grabs your attention? How are African Americans portrayed?				

Thinking Like a Historian: Visual Interpretation (Group and Class Discussion)

N.B. For each individual answer below, identify specific parts of the image to use as evidence as your answer.

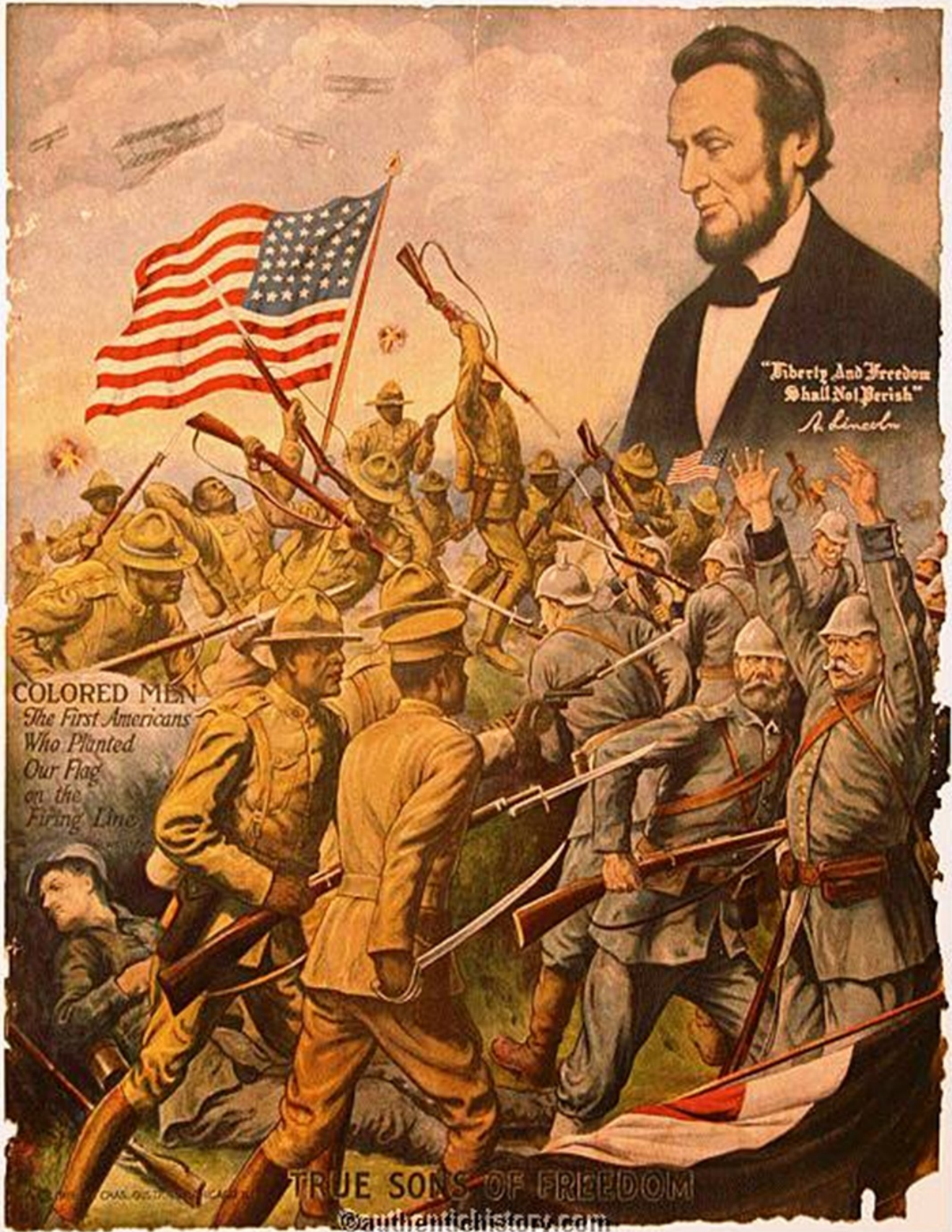
Directions: After sharing individual answers, work toward a group consensus on the following comparison questions. In groups, students will chose two questions to lead for group discussion. The chart will be filled in during class discussion.

Historical Skills	Questions	Group/Class Answers
Sourcing Comparison	<p>What do the documents have in common based on the time period?</p> <p>Based on their point of view?</p>	
Context Comparison	<p>How does the context of War affect views of Race?</p> <p>Determine which image might have the biggest impact based upon its time (context).</p>	
Close Reading Comparison	<p>Compare and contrast how these might have been viewed by white and black communities.</p> <p>What in the image would be appealing to African Americans males?</p> <p>How does the document conflict with broader treatment of African American before and after the documents?</p>	

Document A



Document B







Uncle
Sam
needs
YOU
nigger

Become a member of
the world's highest paid
black mercenary army!

Support White Power
— travel to Viet Nam,
you might get a medal!

Fight for Freedom
... (in Viet Nam)

Receive valuable training
in the skills of killing off
other oppressed people!

(Die Nigger Die — you can't die
fast enough in the ghettos.)

So run to your nearest recruiting chamber!

(KEEP THE FAITH, BABY)



Uncle
Sam
needs
YOU

n [REDACTED]

Become a member of
the world's highest paid
black mercenary army!

Support White Power
— travel to Viet Nam,
you might get a medal!

Fight for Freedom
... (in Viet Nam)

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(Die N [REDACTED] Die — you can't die
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So run to your nearest recruiting chamber!

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